1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

142 days and then mysteriously to have disappeared. The hair of the men often trailed on the ground, and Henry, Catlin, and others refer to this in much detail. Now they wear their hair cut short, of their own volition, and in my brief visit I noticed no peculiarities of complexion or in color or hair. All of them, Mandans, Aricarees, and Minnetarees, seem to be a sturdy, manly set of fellows, with frank and intelligent countenances. I am inclined to think they have not had the best of supervision in the past, nor been treated with sufficient liberality and consideration by the government."

Noted Chiefs—Patriarchs. "Catlin was effusive in his praise of these Indians, and both he and Maximilian appear to have found some individuals who savored strongly of the Chingachgook type of Indian, and whose memories and virtues are venerated today. Such a man, for one, was the old Mah-to-toh-papa, or Four Bears, of Catlin, the Meto-Tope of Maximilian. and I can easily believe that Lean, or Poor Wolf, a Gros Ventre of today, now blind and infirm with the weight of his eighty-three years, has been a man that one could trust and respect. De Smet says that Four Bears was 'the most civil and affable Indian' that he ever met on the Missouri. Two-Chiefs, and Leggings, Mandans, and now old like Poor Wolf, a Gros Ventre, or Hidatsa, must also have been men of dignity and character." (Wheeler, p. 240.)

144 **Race Declining.** "As a pure race 'the polite and friendly Mandans,' as they were known to the traders, are slowly but surely declining, and it will not be long before the last one will have departed for the happy hunting grounds. The reservation rolls call for two hundred and fifty Mandans. In talking with Two-Chiefs, I asked him how many full-blood, pure Mandans he thought still remained. The old man, seventy-two years of age, stood in deep thought for several moments, and then replied, 'Not more than ten families; all the others are mixed blood.' Numerically, the tribe as a whole seems to be holding its own." (Wheeler, p. 242.)

731 **Fort Mandan.** "Not a vestige of Fort Mandan remains. On the return of the expedition in 1806, under date of August 17th, the Lewis and Clarke itinerary says: 'In reaching Fort Mandan we found a few pickets standing on the riverside, but all the houses except one, had been burnt by an accidental fire.'

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

353 Between every pair was a large post. An elevation showing some of the details is reproduced from Morgan in Figure 1, and a ground plan, in Figure 3.

251 171 The sedentary character of the Mandans and the fact that they practiced agriculture led to the development among them of several cultural features not found among the purely hunting tribes. In common with most sedentary tribes they made use of caches or storage pits. Henry[1] gives a description of them saying that, in the fall after harvest, the corn was dried, shelled and put in deep pits. These were about eight feet deep, with a mouth just wide enough for a person to get in, but the inside was hollowed out larger and the sides and bottom were lined with straw. The cache contained twenty to thirty bushels of beans or corn where it kept for several years. The caches were scattered everywhere about the village. Catlin mentions caches, saying that they placed corn in pits six or seven feet deep, jug shaped, and tightly closed at the top.

291 DRESS:—The dress of the Mandans in general was much like that of their neighbors, at the later period of their history at least. There were however some minor differences. Verendrye says that at his visit the men went naked, except for a carelessly worn buffalo robe—not even wearing a breech cloth. The women wore very little as a rule, their only article of attire being an apron about the waist, a hand's breadth wide and a foot long. But he adds later that some of them wore a gown of very soft deerskin. It is probable that other articles of dress were borrowed from their neighbors as time went on.

515 ●302 The men and women both began the day with a bath, after which the body was carefully oiled with castoreum. For any ceremonial or feast the body was also painted in colors, these being mixed with grease. After the bath the face and hair were nearly always whitened. The men in Maximilian's time usu-

291 ally wore a breech cloth, of black and white cloth, and moccasins with little or no ornamentation. The upper part of the body was usually naked as they seldom wore the leather shirt used in many other tribes. Even in the winter, Maximilian says they wore only the buffalo robe over the upper half of the

[1] Op. cit., vol. I, p. 360.

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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body. The small boys went naked but the girls wore a leather dress similar to those of the older women. The woman's dress was the buck-skin tunic which went just below the knee, a girdle held it at the waist, the sleeves were open and the base of the skirt was often fringed. Bead necklaces and earrings were worn, and leggings which did not reach to the knee. The men also wore leggings which were the counterpart of those found among the other plains tribes.

Although the Mandans ordinarily dressed very plainly, yet for the feasts and ceremonies they arrayed themselves as gorgeously as did any of their neighbors, and in practically the same way. Then they wore richly embroidered leather shirts, moccasins covered with quill work, necklaces of elk teeth, bears' claws, odorous roots and large glass beads, with fine painted and embroidered robes, tobacco pouches, quivers, medicine bags, and all the paraphernalia of the plains ceremonial dress. Scalps were used as among the Dakotas, ceremonial pipes and bows were carried. The head-dresses of war eagle, hawk, crow, and raven feathers were worn by members of different societies and occasionally the head-dress of two small polished pieces of buffalo horn was worn. This last was found frequently among the Dakotas. Antelope and deer hoofs were used often as a fringe of bangles along the shirt hem or the sides of the leggings.

The Mandans had a peculiar method of dressing the hair, unlike other Siouan tribes but very much like the Arikara. The hair of the men was allowed to hang down to the thighs, or even to the knees, it was separated into a number of strands, each of which was stuck along its whole length, two or three inches apart, with lumps of mixed glue and colored clay, making nearly solid plaits one and a half inches thick. Oftentimes these plaits were pieced out with beaver skin strips or hair from scalps. One lock of hair hung down forward over the nose, and this was unornamented except for a red ribbon tied about it. There were two copper strips covered with blue and white glass beads woven with the hair on the sides. These hung by one end and were also decorated with dentalia. On the back of the head was an ornament, flat, three or four inches thick, of wood or twisted metal wire. It was fastened to the hair and

3: Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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302 hung down to the shoulders. It was covered with quill work in different colors. On its top was placed horizontally an eagle [171] feather the base of which was covered with red cloth. The usual Siouan head-dresses were also worn. In every day life, however, Maximilian says the hair was knotted up in a 304 tuft. The Mandan men tattooed, but never on more than one half of the body. Usually the right breast and upper arm was tattooed with black parallel lines, accompanied by a few other figures. Occasionally the fore-arm and some of the fingers were tattooed. Occasionally also the women tattooed, but to only a small extent. Ermine was used in nearly all of their finest dresses, and tails of other animals as well as different sorts of bird feathers had especial signification in ceremonial or war [171] costumes. Altogether, as Catlin says, the dress of the Blackfeet, Sioux, and Mandans was practically alike. The great noticeable difference seems to be that the Mandans had much less regard for clothing than did most of their neighbors, they had a tendency toward simple apparel, and the buffalo robe was their original and only absolutely necessary garment.

411 WEAPONS:— The arms of the Mandans as well as their other culture features were much like those of their neighbors. They used the customary things — bows and arrows, lances, shields, knives, and tomahawks, and had in addition a peculiar weapon of their own called a bow-lance. The knives and arrow points were at first of stone as were the axes and tomahawks, but stone implements soon fell into disuse when steel ones were obtained. The Mandan bows were usually of elm or ash wood, and rather short, with cords of twisted sinews. Occasionally, [321] however, a bow of bone or horn was seen. Catlin describes such a one. It was short and had a sinew backing, while the cord was made of three twisted sinews. With the bow was usually a quiver of mountain lion, wild-cat, or wolf skin, the whole hide being used. The arrows of the Mandans were much better made than those of their neighbors. They were feathered with hawk and eagle feathers which were attached in a short spiral, a red line wound round the arrow in a spiral from barb to base. There were hunting points and war points: the for-

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the pit where it was dispatched and the hunter waited for another. This method was also used by the Hidatsa, and so in fact nearly all the Mandan hunting methods and customs were duplicated among their neighbors. The only important exception was the Mandan custom of giving a share of the meat to anyone who might come to the home of a successful hunter and ask for it. Henry tells us that the Hidatsa and Amahami did not have this charitable custom.

WAR:— Among most of the Indians, war was the chief occupation of the men, and the Mandans in this respect differed little from the other tribes. They were constantly in danger from their more numerous enemies, the Dakotas, and in addition frequently had disputes with other smaller bands. The Mandans were not a warlike people, and fought only when necessary; but when the time came they were among the bravest and most fearless warriors of the region. Maximilian says that they had been known to send war parties as far as the Rocky Mountains against the Blackfeet and as far east as the Red River against the Ojibwa. Their chief enemies were, however, the Dakota, the Cheyenne, and at times the Arikara. The custom of sending out war parties was not as usual here as among their neighbors, the Hidatsa. The system of rank in the village was to a considerable extent based upon military prowess; the wearing of different insignia which indicated each man's deeds was a common device. Those who had made a coup wore a wolf's tail at the heel of their moccasin. If a man was the first of a party to touch and kill an enemy, he painted a spiral line about his arm, with another winding in the opposite direction with three cross stripes. For the second enemy he painted his left legging a reddish brown. If he killed an enemy in equal fight before any other enemy was slain, he could put a wolf's tail around each foot. For the third coup two lengthwise stripes with three cross stripes were painted on the arm, this was the most honorable coup and no other distinctive marks were in use, except that another eagle feather might be worn in the hair for each additional coup. If a man made his coup after others were made, the end of the wolf's tail was cut off. Six little wooden sticks worn in the hair showed that a man

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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had been shot six times; some wore a wooden knife, a sign they had killed an enemy with a knife. Maximilian describes one man, a chief, whose face was painted half yellow and half red, with stripes made by rubbing the color off; his arms had seventeen lines showing the number of his deeds, and on his breast, in yellow, was a hand showing that he had made prisoners.

When a youth first wished to lead a war party he at once acquired a medicine. Then he solicited his young men friends by presents and assurances of the efficacy of his medicine and after feasts and dances he departed with as many followers as he could get. In the large war parties there were four real leaders and sometimes three others called bad leaders. Each real leader carried a medicine pipe in a case on his back. To become a chief it was necessary to begin as a war party leader, then to kill a man while in a party where the candidate was not a leader. Again, while following another leader, he must be the first to discover the enemy and kill one of them, and lastly he must have owned at some time a white buffalo hide. Each warrior carried about his neck the whistle of his band, and at the moment of falling upon the enemy these were blown and the war-cry was sounded.

The Mandans seldom took male prisoners but even when taken they were never tortured. As soon as a prisoner had entered the village and eaten corn he was considered as one of the nation; the women, however, could go out and meet the returning party and kill the prisoners then. Scalps were dried and used in decoration. When a successful war party returned they were met by the women and children who entered the village with them dancing the scalp dance. The warriors painted the face, and often the whole body, black, and the scalp dance was danced in the medicine lodge four nights, then later in the middle of the village. If no Mandan was killed in the campaign, the dance was kept up for six months.

In all these war customs we find nothing more than the general plains ideas such as were found in all the Sioux tribes and among most of their neighbors.

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Like Black-chest, Wounded-face selected a clan father, Two-crows, for his individual father. Wounded-face did not know that Two-crows owned two kinds of emblems,— the foxskin cap to be used in dancing and in war, and the head band decorated with the lower kit-fox jaws which was to be worn when courting young women.[1] On the morning of the final transference of membership rights, Two-crows gave Wounded-face the cap and the head band, as well as a shirt, armlets and fringed buckskin leggings. In return, Wounded-face paid his father a fast black horse suited for use in the buffalo chase and some property contributed by his relatives. I get the impression that the transfer of special regalia was automatic; that is to say, if the father happened to own certain specific emblems the son buying his membership bought *ipso facto* the regalia owned by the seller.

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Little-crow states that at the public performance the relatives of the new members brought presents, which were turned over to the fathers, either individually or collectively. In the latter case the fathers proceeded to distribute the gifts among themselves.

575 431 602

In marching outdoors, the first rattler took the lead and was immediately followed by the first hooked-staff officer; Wounded-face — presumably as the owner of the cap — occupied a central position in the line; the second rattler came last, being directly behind the second hooked-staff officer. The first rattler selected a site for the dance and turned in order to begin the formation of a circle there, at the same time raising his rattle and singing very loudly. There was always a special song to be sung prior to the drummers' entrance into the circle. This song was taken up by the second rattler. While the circle was forming, the singers went within the circumference and began to beat their drums. These singers were always the members' fathers, if I understood Wounded-face correctly, but it is probable that this applies only to the first public performance by a new group of members. The songs referred to warlike deeds, and the words were, according to this informant, invariably in the Dakota language.

575 527 535 533 [171]

Little-crow, as already stated, considers the head band decorated with kit-fox jaws as a badge common to all members; he further states that each Kit-Fox had a hair-pipe attached to the left side of the head and that six men had their hair roached. The hair-cutting was done by the men's fathers. Other informants agree that there were two rattlers and two officers with hooked-staffs, wrapped with otterskin and decorated at four points with feathers. Wounded-face says that sometimes the second staff-bearer carried a *straight* stick, in which case an erect eagle feather was secured to the top of the shaft. Little-crow states that rattles were used

575 [292] [302] 293

[1] This seems to conflict with Black-chest's account, which assigns these emblems to distinct officers, but Little-crow regards the kit-fox head band as a badge common to all members.

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purchasers then called him his "father," stroked his arm downwards with his hand, took the weapon out of his hand, and again put it in its place. The other dancer followed, recounted some of his deeds, and offered the lance to one of the buyers, who received it in the same manner as his predecessor, and then put it in its place. The periods of intermission were filled with smoking, singing and drumming, but no rattles were used. Two other Soldiers also rose, told of how they had stolen horses, medicine bundles, or other possessions, from the enemy, and gave two more insignia to the purchasers. After this had been done four or five times, the wives of the buyers rose. Four of them divested themselves of their robes, quickly seized the lances, and carried them, one after another, outside the lodge. After a while they brought them in again. This ceremony was repeated twice, the disrobed women stroked the arms of the strangers and fathers, put on their robes, and passed outside. The persons stroked were expected to follow them into the woods. This procedure resembled that of the Hidatsa in their medicine festival.[1]

Some time after the purchase Maximilian had occasion to observe the dance of the new Half-Shaved Heads. About twenty of them entered the Fort, threw off their robes so as to expose their gaily colored bodies, and formed a circle. They were elaborately decorated and carried the insignia of the dance, such as the otter-wrapped sticks. One man wore a bonnet with horns and ermine strips; another, mounted on horseback, was decorated with paint symbolizing the blood from wounds. Three Soldiers (= Black Mouths) served as musicians. As soon as the drum was beaten, the dancers protruded the upper part of their bodies, and leaped into the air with both feet, at the same time holding their guns ready for firing. Thus they danced in the circle for about a minute, then hallooed, rested for a while, and resumed their performance. After receiving some tobacco, they dispersed, put on their robes, and went to Ruptare, where they also danced among the Hidatsa.[2] A picture of the dance, reproduced from Maximilian's Atlas is shown in Fig. 11.

Black Mouths.

The native name of this society is *i'he poi'here ō'xat'e*, or *numā'k xarā'k ō'xat'e*. Maximilian calls the members of this society "Soldiers." They form the third society in his list, but he states that all the higher classes

[1] Maximilian, II, 274–277.
[2] Maximilian II, 286–287.

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might belong to the Soldiers' class, as the police functions devolved on this society. However, it was necessary that all members should agree to sell; a single negative voice put a stop to the negotiations. Some individuals did not immediately consent to sell when requested in order to exact a greater amount of property from the buyers. The Prince enumerates the undertakings in which the Soldiers took an important part: changes of village sites, buffalo hunts, and other communal movements. More particularly, they took care lest anyone should prematurely startle buffalo herds. Anyone shooting a wolf or other animal at such a time was maltreated, even if he happened to be a chief, and deprived of his gun. In the 'thirties even white people living in the vicinity were subjected to the same rules. The Soldiers frequently forbade the cutting of trees near the Fort, and took away the woodcutters' axes.

Maximilian says that the Soldiers painted the upper part of the face red, and the lower black. Their whistle was made of a crane wing bone. Two pipes, to be smoked on special occasions, remained in the custody of as many pipe-bearers. A rattle was made from a little tin kettle — apparently the baking-powder cans referred to by my own informants — provided with a handle. Among the insignia there were two long, straight poles wrapped with otterskin and decorated with dependent owl feathers. In war these poles were planted in the ground, and must not be abandoned by their bearers. A corresponding regulation applied to one other pole decorated with raven feathers in the manner described and illustrated by Maximilian in connection with a Blackfoot society.[1]

The following origin tradition was given by Wounded-face.[2] Long ago Good-fur-robe assembled the middle-aged men. To the leader he gave one cornstalk, and to the rear man another. "When the enemy chase you," he instructed them, "plant these in the ground and do not run away." Sometimes a cornstalk has five branches at the top. Later, a stick with a spear head was made to represent the cornstalks; owl wing-feathers were tied to its side, as well as crow or raven wing feathers and a raven head. It was wrapped with otterskin, and strips of skin were made to hang down from several points of the staff to represent leaves of the corn. There were two pipe-bearers and two rattlers, the latter taking places next to the spear-carriers, while the pipe men marched in the center. While dancing, the Black Mouths left their circle open at one side. The order in which they marched was: one spear officer, one rattler, the rank and file, the pipe-bearers, the rank and file, the second rattler, the second spear officer. The Black

[1] Maximilian, I. 376.
[2] Cf. Maximilian's version, referred to on p. 300.

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575 293 [302] Mouths were also called "Brave Men's society." They painted their faces black. The Goose women used the same paint, because their society was founded by the same man. When the time came for singing, the first rattler walked ahead and began to sing. Then the drummers took up the song. The next time the second rattler acted in the same manner. The raven-lance bearers had a special song and dance, during which they crossed each other's path.

575 726 554 533 535 One summer, when the society wished to give a performance because some Sioux were coming to fight, they stuck two tipi poles into the ground, and tied raven-lances to the top. One of the Soldiers cried, "Kā! Kā! Kā!" This was in imitation of crows. Then some other member went outside the lodge to see which one had cried. Returning, he said, "It is not a living raven, but the raven head on Skunk's lance." Skunk was a very brave man. The people said, "We will find out what this means." Then someone took the lances down, and returned them to their owners. Skunk said, "Hold on, my fellow-members, I wish to know the reason why my lance is singing." He got his associate to accompany him, and both lance officers then went through the village, singing this song: —

"kē'ka, nasarā'rōoca. mī' ō`watē'roc.
"Raven, you sing. I want to die.
"kika're e'henik, ō'ota."
"If you are afraid, go away."

The people hearing Skunk thought him braver than ever. They said to him, "This is your day, do what you wish best." The people encouraged Skunk. When the society started outdoors for a dance, Skunk took the lead, and again sang. A circle was formed. All the people came to watch the performance. Skunk once more sang his song. He danced alone, in a slanting line. These were the words of his song: —

"mīnukarité, nū'tamina'tare hū'miikāc. ī'miinahèc."
"My friends, our enemies are numerous. I am used to it" [that is, to fight].

When the time came to fight, Skunk struck many coups. This is what the singing of the raven had indicated.

575 626 In addition to the police functions described by Maximilian, Wounded-face mentions a special duty devolving on the two pipe-bearers. When some villager wished to kill a fellow-tribesman, these officers filled up a pipe, and gave him presents in order to make him desist. Acceptance signified acquiescence in their wishes.

575 Water-chief became a Black Mouth, together with about twenty of his comrades, at thirty; generally, however, the members were older. They

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feasted their fathers for twelve nights. My informant received a tin rattle, as his father had been one of the singers, but, having a bad voice, he gave it to another man who was a better singer. When the new members paraded about, the villagers called them by name, and said, "You Black Mouths, die soon, for you are the bravest of the societies." The members put black paint on the lower part of the face, and black stripes on the body. If a dog came near them during a parade, a Black Mouth who had shot an enemy was permitted symbolically to refer to his deed by shooting the dog.

Bull Society.

During their dance the members of the Bull organization (mēro'k ō'xat'e) wore, according to Maximilian, the upper part of the skin of a buffalo head with the horns and the long hairs of the neck. Two men, the bravest of all and pledged never to retreat from an enemy, wore together with the horns a complete representation of a buffalo head; this mask was provided with artificial eyeslits, surrounded by iron or tin rings. One woman attendant walked about during the dance, offering to the two mask-wearers water from a bowl. This woman was clad in a fine new suit of bighorn skin, and her face was painted with vermilion. The Bulls were the only society to use wooden whistles. They had a piece of red cloth fastened to the back, as well as the representation of a buffalo tail, and carried weapons in their hands. The two mask-wearers kept on the outside of the other dancers, and imitated the voice and actions of bulls, their shy wheeling over towards one side, their manner of looking about in all directions, etc. During the performance of the Bull dance witnessed by the Prince, there were nine dancers, who discharged their guns immediately on entering the Fort. Only one of them wore the complete buffalo head, the rest wore pieces of the skin of the forehead, a pair of cloth sashes, and an appendix decorated with feathers, which represented the tail; they carried shields decorated with red cloth, and long, beautifully ornamented lances.[1] A reproduction of Bodmer's drawing of the Bull dance in Maximilian's Atlas is presented in Fig. 12.

Wounded-face had heard that long ago a Mandan, who had a buffalo front leg in place of one arm, founded the Bull society. My informant said that only a few wore the piece of buffalo head skin with horns, some others merely dressed their hair in bunches in front. Still others covered their face with a mask, formed by fastening a tanned skin painted yellow over the

[1] Maximilian, II, 315.

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buffalo skin, the hair of which, however, was exposed from the wearer's forehead down to his chin. The spears carried were not very long, and the head pointed downwards. Shields rested on the left arm. Members who had struck enemies, carried guns; if they had used arrows to kill a foe, they carried arrows. Wounds received in battle were symbolized by red body paint. While dancing in the village, the Bulls jumped around. They pointed spears and guns at anyone approaching them, and thereby frightened young people. Those who had slain enemies enacted their martial deeds. For music they used a *large* drum.

Calf-woman remembered seeing six women known as "Bull women" at a Bull performance; they sat behind the men singers. A woman brought in water, but only such members as had saved a woman's life were permitted to drink of it. This informant also remembers one of the mask-wearers pretending to spear people, and frightening the children, jumping up with both legs, and stamping one foot at a time.

The Bull dance described by Boller was not connected with the Bull society, but formed part of the Okipe as is obvious from comparison with Maximilian's and Catlin's accounts of this ceremony.[1]

Dog[1] Society.

Maximilian describes the emblem of the society as a stick a foot or a foot and a half in length, which was ornamented with blue and white beads, and to which a large number of animal hoofs were attached. To the front of the stick there was tied an eagle feather, to the lower extremity a piece of beaded leather. The members wore a large cap of colored cloth, to which were attached a great number of raven, magpie, and owl feathers, and which was further decorated with colored horsehair and weasel skins. Their whistle was large, and made from the wing bone of a swan. Three of them wore in the back sashes of red cloth similar to those of the Crazy Dog society. A bunch of owl, raven, or magpie feathers — and frequently a combination of all three — was attached to the head so as to hang down in the back. The three officers referred to were regarded as Real Dogs. People would throw a piece of meat into the ashes of a fire, or on the ground, and say, "You Dog, eat!" Then they were obliged to fall foul of it and to devour it like dogs or beasts of prey.

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[1] Boller, 103–105; Maximilian, II, 174, 178; Catlin, I, 164 f.

[2] The native name is mini's ō'xatoc. What was said above (p. 306) as to the translation of the word *wiwi'a* applies in this case also. The equivalence of the Hidatsa Dog society cannot be doubted, and Maximilian's rendering of the Mandan name supports this view.

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A dance of the "Dog society" of Ruptare village that was witnessed by Bodmer is described by Maximilian. After a performance in their lodge, the members, twenty-seven or twenty-eight in number, advanced towards the Fort. Some were clad in beautiful robes or bighorn-skin shirts, others in red cloth shirts, or blue and red uniforms. Some exposed the upper part of their body, on which coups were indicated in reddish-brown paint. In this connection the Prince speaks of *four* Real Dogs, all wearing huge bonnets of raven or magpie feathers, tipped with small white plumes, while in the center there was a fan of the tail feathers of a wild turkey or eagle. Round the neck each of these officers wore a long strip of red cloth, which extended down the back as far as the calves and was knotted in the middle of the back. Two additional officers wore similarly colossal bonnets of yellowish owl feathers, with dark oblique stripes, and one had a large, horned war-bonnet with a feathered streamer hanging down in the back. All others were ornamented with a bunch of thickly-set raven, magpie, or owl feathers, which was considered emblematic of the society. All members wore long whistles, and carried in their left arm some weapon, while the hoof rattle was held in the right hand. A circle was formed. In the center [534] there was a large drum, which was beaten by five poorly clad musicians; in addition to these men, who were seated, two drummers stood on the side, beating hand-drums. After whistling in their places in accompaniment to the rapid and violent beats of the drum, the Dogs suddenly began to dance, dropping their robes to the ground. Several of them danced in the middle of the circle, leaning their bodies forward, jumping up some distance with both feet and coming down firmly on the ground. The other Indians danced without any attention to orderly arrangement, crowding one another, turning their faces towards the circle, and occasionally joining in lowering the head and upper part of the body.[1]

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Wounded-face says that the rattle (wĭ'o oxerō're) consisted of a stick covered with buckskin, to which the hoofs of young buffalo were attached. There were two men with sashes, which were half green and half yellow, and which were decorated with feathers. The skin cap had magpie feathers tied to it in a large bunch, and a white plume was fastened to every feather. Two eagle feathers, together with owl feathers, were also used for a head ornament. A large whistle was suspended from a wide strip of skin decorated with quillwork. The body was painted red. All the members carried the hoof-rattles, and sometimes they beat a drum or a log with them. All the Dogs were portly old men, slow in their dancing. Wounded-face thinks the society originated with the Hidatsa.

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[1] Maximilian, II, 309–311.

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Then this dried meat was appropriated by the mothers. When the runners had come back, they cleansed themselves by brushing themselves with sage. Then all returned to the village. There a sweat lodge was made. After all the women had entered the sweat house, the chief singer also went in, chanted, dipped some sagebrush into water, and sprinkled all the women with it. Next the mothers prepared food, and gave it to their daughters, whereupon a general feast followed.

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While the two middle officers wore the duck-bill head bands, the leader and rear officer wore no distinctive badge. The members on the left side of the lodge painted their faces black between the mouth and chin, while those on the right side used blue paint. The musicians had drums, but no rattles.

M H 575 527

The object of the ceremony was to make the corn grow. The geese and the corn were supposed to be one and the same thing.

MH [56] 575 432 527

Owl-woman's social career is well-nigh unique in that she never joined any organization until she was of mature age, when she entered the Goose society. She knew of only one other Mandan woman who had not joined other societies. When the River women collectively bought the Goose society, Owl-woman went along and purchased the membership with them. A candidate had to prepare a large quantity of dried beef for her mother, and also presented her with a horse. When receiving the bundle of sage with the corn, the novice paid her adopter another horse. According to Owl-woman, anyone, man, woman, or child, might volunteer to make an offering to the geese, and would then have to prepare the requisite food for the ceremony. The society marched out in regular order towards this person's lodge, the singers going ahead of the rest. The middle officer nearer to the Leader had her face painted blue from the mouth downwards, while her mate used black paint. The members halted and danced four times on the way. In entering, the rear officer went in first. One of the musicians smoked sage for incense near the central fireplace, and all members approached in order to scent their blankets. When all had taken their places, the person who had pledged the ceremony brought in the calico, or other property, to be presented as an offering, and also paid the incense-burner and his fellow-musicians. Then the singers began to sing for the dance. They sang four sets of four songs each, with an intermission between each set. After the dance, one of the singers took a stick, impaled some of the food on it, and offered it to the four quarters, finally throwing it into the fireplace. Before the commencement of the feast, the pledger went to the singers and induced them to utter a prayer in his behalf, asking for prosperity, victory in war, and the other good things of life. He also went about to the several members, and anyone owning personal medicines gave them to

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
NQ17 Mahdan NQ17
Hidatsa NQ14

M H 575 527

The charms of most of the squaws in this "Goose Band" appeared to have faded long ago: they were evidently past the bloom of youth, and their voices and tempers had not improved in consequence. However, on this occasion they endeavored to look their best with the aid of paint and finery, in which respect they are not far behind their white sisters of more civilized climes. A row of poles resting upon forked sticks is put up, over which are hung in profusion pieces of fine, fat, dry meat, which have been carefully saved for this occasion. A band of four or five drummers take their seats close to one end, and a double row of squaws next to them facing each other. Each woman carried a bunch of long seedgrass, the favorite food of the wild goose, and at intervals all get up and dance in a circle with a peculiar shuffling step, singing and keeping time to the taps of the drum.

The spectators keep at a respectful distance and enjoy the fun, which consists in the attempts of some of the young men to steal the meat from the poles, in which however they are often thwarted by the vigilance of a few wise old "geese" who are constantly on the alert to prevent theft. If successful, the meat is carried off in great glee to some lodge, where they cook and eat it at their leisure. These exquisites are elaborately gotten up with bunches of raven plumes fluttering from their scalp-locks, and stripes of white and yellow clay upon their bodies, comprise their only covering.

M H [301 302]

Finally, one of the old men (who have been thumping assiduously on the drums all the while) takes his place a few hundred yards off on the prairie, and a grand race by the whole goose band follows. All form in line together, and run around the old gander before returning to the starting point.

The race over, the scaffolds are taken down, a feast prepared, and the meat remaining on hand cooked and eaten. For the rest of the day the band danced around among the different lodges, and of course paid a visit to the fort before concluding. On these occasions a few yards of calico or some trifling gifts are always expected to be thrown to the "Medicine" by the traders.[1]

M H 241

It is probable that the Hidatsa and Mandan had several corn ceremonies distinct from one another and from the performances of the Goose society. Catlin describes a green-corn ceremony involving a dance of four men with corn stalks round a kettle with boiling green corn, followed by the ceremonial friction of new fire, but his account has been discredited by Matthews.[2]

H 241

An Hidatsa ceremony performed in honor of the mythical Old-woman-who-never-dies, for the purpose of securing abundant corn crops is described by Mr. Curtis.[3] The corn singer figures prominently in this account but nothing is said of a women's society. However, we are told that those were invited to participate whose medicines consisted of various birds supposed to be children of Old-woman-who-never-dies and therefore peculiarly appropriate to the occasion.[4] Say describes a corn dance in which women play an important part, but does not identify them with any particular society:

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[1] Boller, 147–149.
[2] Catlin, I, 188–190; Matthews, 47.
[3] Curtis, IV, 148–152.
[4] Ibid, 150.

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

and turned about. The women also faced about. Then all advanced with a kind of shuffling movement the right and the left foot alternately, without moving from their places. The musicians, who carried drums, remained in the rear. All the women painted their faces and wore feathers in the back of the head in imitation of men. They formed a circle, and danced forward. A few women cut out strips of rawhide, decorated them with beads, and placed them on their heads as though they were horns. This is said to have been in imitation of the Cheyenne women. Some young men used to watch from the roofs of their lodges. Each member selected one of these men to dance with her. After a while his relatives brought calico and other goods for his partner in order to ransom him and absolve him from the necessity of continuing to dance with her.

In purchasing the society, the aunts or mothers presented dresses to their nieces or daughters while they received horses in return.

White Buffalo Cow Society.

The White Buffalo Cow society (ptĭ'take ŏ'xat'e) was the highest of the women's societies known to the Mandan and Hidatsa, the Old Women's organization (p. 338) really belonging to another category.

Maximilian says that the members painted one eye any color they pleased (most generally azure) and had black tattoo marks between lips and chin. Their headdress consisted of a broad strip of white buffalo cowhide worn in hussar-cap fashion and topped with a bunch of feathers.[1] In Maximilian's day each Mandan village had its own White Buffalo organization, and he had occasion to observe the performances of both. In the performance of the Mih-Tutta-Hangkusch society, seventeen, for the most part elderly, women and two men with rattles and drums took part; one of the men was holding a gun in his hand. The leader was an elderly woman wrapped in the skin of a white buffalo cow. In her right arm she carried cornucopia-fashion a bundle of twigs, tipped with plumes, with an eagle wing and a tin drinking vessel secured to the grip. Another woman also carried a bundle of this type. The men wore no headdresses. Of the women, two had skunk-skin head bands, the rest wore headdresses of white buffalo skin decorated in front with owl or raven feathers, which were partly dyed red. All women had the same face paint,— vermilion on the left cheek and eye, with two blue spots on the opposite temple, close to the right eye. The leader was wrapped in the skin of a white buffalo cow. All the others except two, who

[1] Maximilian, II, 145–146.

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

wore robes with the hairy side out, wore painted women's robes. They formed a circle, the men began to sing, and the women danced, taking up the tune at the same time. They waddled like ducks from side to side, raising each foot alternately higher than the other, but not moving from their position. After a while there was an intermission, which was again followed by a dance. Only the older members had the tattoo marks between mouth and chin that were distinctive of the society. When Maximilian saw the society from Ruptare perform, there were three male musicians, who also wore white buffalo skin headdresses, and none of the women carried bundles of twigs. Otherwise the equipment was the same as in the other dance.[1]

An illustration of the dance of this society, reproduced from Maximilian's Atlas, is shown in Fig. 16.

Boller's account, which is of considerably later date, contributes the important fact that in case of a famine the White Buffalo Cow women were expected to make buffalo herds come nearer to the village. A similar function is attributed by Catlin to *male* Buffalo dancers wearing masks of a type described in this paper in connection with the Bull society (p. 315). Catlin, however, does not connect his Buffalo dance with any organization, for though only about ten or fifteen men are said to have joined in the dance at one time, he states that every Mandan was obliged to keep a buffalo mask for possible use in the buffalo-calling ceremony on the request of the chiefs.[2] Oddly enough, both Catlin and Boller say that their respective Buffalo dancers never failed to bring in the herds for the reason that they continued their performance for weeks if necessary, until buffalo were actually sighted. The dance of the society is thus described by Boller:

> The different members of the White-Cow band began to assemble, and soon the regular taps of the drum notified the camp that the great and important ceremony was in full progress. At one end of the lodge sat the musicians or drummers, three in number, who were untiring in their efforts, and aided their instrumentation by singing in a monotonous chanting strain. The women, comprising some forty or fifty matrons of the village, most of whose charms had unmistakably faded, were all attired in their quaintly garnished deer-skin dresses. Each had a spot of vermilion on either cheek, and their long black hair, which was carefully combed out and dressed with marrow grease, fell full and flowing over their shoulders, confined around the forehead with a fillet of white buffalo cow-skin. One of them had a white robe (which is very scarce, and held in the highest esteem) wrapped around her. This white robe was the common property of the band, and in its great power as a "medicine" were centred their hopes of bringing in the buffalo.[3]

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[1] Ibid., 283–284, 297.
[2] Catlin, 1, 127–128.
[3] Boller, 218–219.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

161 Morse,* therefore, estimates the number of these people rather too high, when he states it at 1250 souls.

142 The Mandans are a vigorous, well-made race of people, rather above the middling stature, and very few of the men could be called short. The tallest man now living was Mahchsi-Karehde (the flying war eagle), who was five feet ten inches two lines, Paris measure (above six feet English). In general, however, they are not so tall as the Manitaries. Many of them are robust, broad-shouldered, and muscular, while others are slender and small limbed. Their physiognomy is, in general, the same as that of most of the Missouri Indians, but their noses are not so long and arched as those of the Sioux, nor have they such high cheek bones. The nose of the Mandans and Manitaries is not broad—sometimes aquiline, or slightly curved, and often quite straight. Their eyes are, in general, long and narrow, of a dark brown colour; the inner angle is often rather lower in childhood, but it is rarely so in maturer age. The mouth is broad, large, rather prominent, and the lower jaw broad and angular. No great difference occurs in the form of the skull: in general I did not find the facial angle smaller than in Europeans, yet there are some exceptions.† Their hair is long, thick, lank, and black, but seldom as jet and glossy as that of the Brazilians: that of children is often only dark brown, especially at the tips; and Bradbury speaks of brown hair among the Mandans. There are whole families among them, as well as among the Blackfeet, whose hair is grey, or black mixed with white, so that the whole head appears grey. The families of Sih-Chida and Mato-Chiha are instances of this peculiarity. The latter chief was particularly remarkable in this respect: his hair grew in distinct locks of brown, black, silver grey, but mostly white, and his eyebrows perfectly white, which had a strange effect in a tall otherwise handsome man, between twenty and thirty years of age. They encourage the growth of their hair, and often lengthen it by artificial means. Their teeth, like those of all the Missouri Indians, are particularly fine, strong, firm, even, and as white as ivory. It is very seldom that you see a defect or a tooth

[302]

114 * See Dr. Morse's Report, p. 252. He speaks (p. 349) of the Mandans, Blackfeet, Rapid (Fall) Indians, and Assiniboins. His tables of the Indian population of the United States are in page 362.

† Say, who, in general, gives a very accurate description of the North American Indians (see Major Long's Travels), lays too much stress, as it appears to me, on the character of the receding of the forehead; for, by a comparison of a great many skulls, I have fully convinced myself of the contrary. Say affirmed, also, that the facial angle is not so small as Professor Blumenbach supposes. The Indian features, as far as my experience reaches, cannot be called either Mongol or Malay, the latter of which is more perceptible in the Brazilians, notwithstanding the manifest affinity with the North Americans. The learned traveller, Augustus de St. Hilaire, even attributes to the Brazilians a conformation of the skull, according to which those people are endowed with inferior intellectual faculties. (See Voyages dans les Districts de Diamande). The missionary, Parker, in his Travels to the Columbia River, p. 155, expresses himself, in this respect, entirely in accordance with my views; and D'Orbigny confirms them in respect to the South Americans, in the conformation of whose skulls he found considerable diversities.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

301 frames are of a considerable size, divided at one end like a boot-jack, and ornamented with brass nails, ribbons, pieces of skin and feathers (see the annexed woodcut of a hand looking-glass). Some

had very ingeniously fastened this important appendage to their fan made of an eagle's wing. The Indian dandy is constantly consulting his mirror, and, if he has been travelling, especially in the high winds so prevalent here, he immediately has recourse to his looking-glass, and his disordered dress is most carefully arranged.

302 301 It is remarkable that the men are far more vain than the women, and the latter are obliged to be greatly inferior to the lords of the creation in their attire and adornments. The costume of the Mandans is rather simple: by far the greatest attention is paid to the head-dress. Their hair is parted transversely across the middle of the head, the front hair combed smoothly down, and generally divided into three flat bands, two of which hang down on the temples, and are generally plaited. To these plaits they attach the ornament already mentioned, which consists of two strips of leather or cloth closely embroidered with white or azure glass beads, and intertwined with brass wire, as represented in the portrait of Pehriska-Ruhpa (Plate XVII). If the ground of this ornament is red or blue, it is studded with white beads, and if the ground is white the beads are blue. They put this ornament in their hair and pull it over the temples; a long string is fastened to the under part, which reaches to the waist, and is adorned with alternate rows of blue beads and white dentalium shells. Between these two singularly decorated plaits there is, in the centre of the forehead, a smooth flat lock reaching to the nose, which is not ornamented, but only tied with a red ribbon. The back hair falls smoothly from the crown of the head to the waist, and is divided into many tails, an inch and a half or two inches broad, which are smeared with brownish or red clay. When the hair is not naturally long enough it is frequently lengthened with other human hair, often that of enemies whom they have killed, which is fastened on with rosin. At the back of the head they sometimes wear a long stiff ornament in the shape of a ruler, three or four fingers broad, made of small sticks entwined with wire, which is fastened to the hair, and reaches down to the shoulders. It is covered with porcupine quills, dyed of various colours, in very neat patterns. At the upper end of this ornament an eagle's feather is affixed horizontally, the quill end of which is covered with red cloth, and the tip is ornamented with a bunch of horsehair dyed yellow. The lower white half of the feather is frequently dyed red with vermilion, and the quill covered with dyed porcupine quills. Such feathers are represented in Plate XXI. Figs. 13, 14. When the Indians are not in their best dress, when they are travelling, or going to the chase, they fasten their long hair in a thick bunch.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

When, however, they are full dressed, they put a variety of feathers in their hair, frequently a semicircle of feathers of birds of prey, like radii, or sunbeams, or a bunch of the tail feathers of the raven placed in a similar manner. Sometimes they have a thick tuft of owl's feathers, or small rosettes made of broad raven's feathers, cut short, in the centre of which is the tail of a bird of prey spread out like a fan. These feather ornaments are frequently determined according to the several bands or unions, of which I shall speak in the sequel. They likewise wear the large horned feather cap; this is a cap consisting of strips of white ermine, with pieces of red cloth hanging down behind as far as the calves of the legs, to which is attached an upright row of black and white eagle's feathers, beginning at the head and reaching to the whole length. Only distinguished warriors, who have performed many exploits, may wear this head-dress (See Plate XIII., which is the best representation hitherto given of it).

If they give away one or more of these head-dresses, which they estimate very highly, they are immediately considered men of great importance; the regular price of such a cap is a good horse; for a single eagle's feather is always valued at one or two dollars. On their buffalo robes they often represent this feather cap, under the image of a sun. Very celebrated and eminent warriors, when most highly decorated, wear in their hair various pieces of wood, as signals of their wounds and heroic deeds. Thus Mato-Topé (see his portrait, Plate XIV.) had fastened transversely in his hair a wooden knife, painted red, and about the length of a hand, because he had killed a Chayenne chief with his knife; then six wooden sticks, painted red, blue, and yellow, with a brass nail at one end, indicating so many musket wounds which he had received. For an arrow wound, he fastened in his hair the wing feather of a wild turkey; at the back of his head he wore a large bunch of owl's feathers, dyed yellow, with red tips, as the badge of the Menis-Ochata (the dog band).[1] The half of his face was painted red, and the other yellow; his body was painted reddish-brown, with narrow stripes, which were produced by taking off the colour with the tip of the finger wetted. On his arms, from the shoulder downwards, he had seventeen yellow stripes, which indicated his warlike deeds, and on his breast the figure of a hand, of a yellow colour, as a sign that he had captured some prisoners. A warrior so adorned takes more time for his toilette than the most elegant Parisian belle. The colour with which they paint their bodies is mixed with grease. When in mourning they colour the face and hands white. The women and children paint only their faces red, leaving the hair its natural colour. The Mandans and Manitaries, and all the Indians of the Upper Missouri, often wear the handsome necklace made of the claws of the grizzly bear. These claws are very large in the spring, frequently three inches long, and the points are tinged of a white colour, which is much esteemed; only the claws of the fore feet are used for necklaces, which are fastened to a strip of otter skin, lined with red cloth, and embroidered with glass beads, which hangs down the back like a long tail. Such a

[1] [This is one of the age-grade societies of the men. See also Cat. 116, pp. 355-56. --Analyst]

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NO17

Such a necklace is seldom to be had for less than twelve dollars; and very often the owners of them will not part with them on any terms. The Mandans adorn themselves with many other kinds of necklaces, such as strings of glass beads, scented roots, or fungi, elks' teeth, for 100 or 150 of which they will, in exchange, give a horse, or something equivalent. These Indians generally wear no covering on the upper part of the body; the leather shirt of the Assiniboins, Sioux, Crows, Blackfeet, and other nations that live more to the north and north-west, are seldom used among them; yet a few individuals have obtained them from those Indians, either as presents, or by barter. Even in the midst of winter, the Mandans wear nothing on the upper part of the body, under their buffalo robe. They paint their bodies of a reddish-brown colour, on some occasions with white clay; and frequently draw red or black figures on their arms. The face is, for the most part, painted all over with vermilion, or yellow, in which latter case the circumference of the eyes and the chin are red. There are, however, no set rules for painting, and it depends on the taste of the Indian dandy; yet, still, a general similarity is observed. The bands, in their dances, and also after battles, and when they have performed some exploit, follow the established rule. In ordinary festivals, and dances, and whenever they wish to look particularly fine, the young men paint themselves in every variety of way, and each endeavours to find out some new mode. Should he find another dandy painted just like himself, he immediately retires and makes a change in the pattern, which may happen three or four times during the festival. If they have performed an exploit, the entire face is painted jet black. Sometimes, though seldom, the Mandans adorn the wrist and upper arm with polished steel bracelets, which they obtain from the merchants; often they wear many brass rings on their fingers, and are, on the whole, excessively fond of ornaments and finery. The chief article of their dress is the ample buffalo robe, called mahita, or mih-aha, which is often very elaborate and valuable. In dry weather these buffalo robes are worn with the hair inwards, and in rainy weather with the hairy side outwards. They are tanned on the fleshy side, and painted either white or reddish-brown, and ornamented with a transverse band of blue or white glass beads, and three large rosettes of the same beads, often of very tasteful patterns, at regular intervals. The centre is frequently red, surrounded with sky blue, embroidered with white figures, or sometimes the reverse. The transverse band is worked with variously dyed porcupine quills, and is then narrower. This, however, is now old-fashioned, and was worn before the coloured glass beads were obtained in such numbers from the Whites. Other robes are painted with a reddish-brown ground, and black figures, especially of animals; others have a white ground, with representations of their heroic deeds in black, or in gay colours, with the wounds they received, the loss of blood, the killed, the prisoners, the arms they have taken, the horses stolen (the number of which is indicated by the number of horse-shoes), in black, red, green, or yellow figures, executed in their yet rude style of painting. The

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

291 garment, with open sleeves, and a girdle round the waist; the hem of this dress is often scolloped and fringed; they ornament the wrists with iron rings, and tie strings of glass beads round their necks, and sometimes in their ears. Their leggins, called, by the Canadians, mitasse, are short, reaching only from the ankle to the knee. Their shoes are simple, and without any ornament.

301 Tattooing is in use among these people, but by no means general. Most commonly only the left half of the breast and the corresponding arm are marked with black parallel stripes, and a few other figures. The lower arm and some of the fingers are occasionally marked; the men do not tattoo their faces, and they are far inferior in this art to the New Zealanders and other nations of the South Seas. Among the women such designs are sometimes seen, but not [56 1] frequently, and they are chiefly among the women's band of the white buffalo cow.[1] The point of the needle is dyed a dark blue with the bark of the willow soaked in water.

302 171 In Major Long's Travels to the Rocky Mountains it is stated that the Crows rub their bodies with castoreum, on account of its pleasant scent. I must observe, however, that the custom is not confined to one nation, but is practised by the Mandans, Manitaries, Crows, and Blackfeet, and most of the other tribes of the Upper Missouri. They mix the castoreum with a red colour, and with it rub their face and frequently their hair.

361 712 Having obtained a clear idea of the outward appearance of these Indians, we will next consider their habitations, villages, and domestic life. Their villages are assemblages of clay huts, of greater or less extent, placed close to each other, without regard to order. Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, the largest of the Mandan villages, was about 150 or 200 paces in diameter, the second was much smaller. The circumference forms an irregular circle, and was anciently surrounded with strong posts, or palisades, which have, however, gradually disappeared as the natives used them for fuel in the cold winters. At four places, at nearly equal distances from each other, is a bastion built of clay, furnished with loop-holes, and lined both within and without with basket-work of willow branches. They form an angle, and are open towards the village; the earth is filled in between the basket-work; and it is said that these bulwarks, which are now in a

[1] [This is one of the women's age-grade societies.—Analyst.]

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

142 account for it. Their traditions, so far as I have yet learned them, afford us no information of their having had any knowledge of white men before the visit of Lewis and Clarke, made to their village thirty-three years ago Since that time there have been but very few visits from white men to this place, and surely not enough to have changed the complexions and the customs of a nation. And I recollect perfectly well that Governor Clarke told me, before I started for this place, that I would find the Mandans a strange people and half white.

The diversity in the colour of hair is also equally as great as that in the complexion; for in a numerous group of these people (and more particularly amongst the females, who never take pains to change its natural colour, as the men often do), there may be seen every shade and colour of hair that can be seen in our own country, with the exception of red or auburn, which is not to be found.

And there is yet one more strange and unaccountable peculiarity, which can probably be seen nowhere else on earth; nor on any rational grounds accounted for,—other than it is a freak or order of Nature, for which she has not seen fit to assign a reason. There are very many, of both sexes, and of every age, from infancy to manhood and old age, with hair of a bright silvery grey; and in some instances almost perfectly white.

This singular and eccentric appearance is much oftener seen among the
● [302] women than it is with the men; for many of the latter who have it, seem ashamed of it, and artfully conceal it, by filling their hair with glue and black and red earth. The women, on the other hand, seem proud of it, and display it often in an almost incredible profusion, which spreads over their shoulders and falls as low as the knee. I have ascertained, on a careful enquiry, that about one in ten or twelve of the whole tribe are what the French call "cheveux gris," or greyhairs; and that this strange and unaccountable phenomenon is not the result of disease or habit; but that it is unquestionably a hereditary character which runs in families, and indicates no inequality in disposition or intellect. And by passing this hair through my hands, as I often have, I have found it uniformly to be as coarse and harsh as a horse's mane; differing materially from the hair of other colours, which amongst the Mandans, is generally as fine and as soft as silk.

The reader will at once see, by the above facts, that there is enough upon the faces and heads of these people to stamp them peculiar,—when he meets them in the heart of this almost boundless wilderness, presenting such diversities of colour in the complexion and hair; when he knows from what he has seen, and what he has read, that all other primitive tribes known in America, are dark copper-coloured, with jet black hair.

ccc From these few facts alone, the reader will see that I am amongst a strange and interesting people, and know how to pardon me, if I lead him through a maze of novelty and mysteries to the knowledge of a strange, yet kind and hospitable, people, whose fate, like that of all their race is sealed;—

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

whose doom is fixed, to live just long enough to be imperfectly known, and then to fall before the fell disease or sword of civilizing devastation.

The stature of the Mandans is rather below the ordinary size of man, with beautiful symmetry of form and proportion, and wonderful suppleness and elasticity; they are pleasingly erect and graceful, both in their walk and their attitudes; and the hair of the men, which generally spreads over their backs, falling down to the hams, and sometimes to the ground, is divided into plaits or slabs of two inches in width, and filled with a profusion of glue and red earth or vermillion, at intervals of an inch or two, which becoming very hard, remains in and unchanged from year to year.

This mode of dressing the hair is curious, and gives to the Mandans the most singular appearance. The hair of the men is uniformly all laid over from the forehead backwards; carefully kept above and resting on the ear, and thence falling down over the back, in these flattened bunches, and painted red, extending oftentimes quite on to the calf of the leg, and sometimes in such profusion as almost to conceal the whole figure from the person walking behind them. In the portrait of San-ja-ka-ko-kah (the deceiving wolf, PLATE 54), where he is represented at full length, with several others of his family around him in a group, there will be seen a fair illustration of these and other customs of these people.

The hair of the women is also worn as long as they can possibly cultivate it, oiled very often, which preserves on it a beautiful gloss and shows its natural colour. They often braid it in two large plaits, one falling down just back of the ear, on each side of the head; and on any occasion which requires them to "put on their best looks," they pass their fingers through it, drawing it out of braid, and spreading it over their shoulders. The Mandan women observe strictly the same custom, which I observed amongst the Crows and Blackfeet (and, in fact, all other tribes I have seen, without a single exception), of parting the hair on the forehead, and always keeping the crease or separation filled with vermilion or other red paint. This is one of the very few little (and apparently trivial) customs which I have found amongst the Indians, without being able to assign any cause for it, other than that "they are Indians," and that this is an Indian fashion.

In mourning, like the Crows and most other tribes, the women are obliged to crop their hair all off; and the usual term of that condolence is until the hair has grown again to its former length

When a man mourns for the death of a near relation the case is quite different; his long, valued tresses, are of much greater importance, and only a lock or two can be spared. Just enough to tell of his grief to his friends, without destroying his most valued ornament, is doing just reverence and respect to the dead.

To repeat what I have said before, the Mandans are a pleasing and friendly race of people, of whom it is proverbial amongst the Traders and all who ever have known them that their treatment of white men in their

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

292 of ermine skins and tails, which hang over the top of the head-dress, somewhat in the form that the large and profuse locks of hair hang and fall over the head of a buffalo bull. See head-dress in PLATES 14, 64, and 91, of three different tribes.

600 The same custom I have found observed amongst the Sioux,—the Crows —the Blackfeet and Assinneboins, and it is one of so striking a character as needs a few more words of observation. There is a peculiar meaning or importance (in their estimation) to this and many other curious and unaccountable appearances in the habits of Indians, upon which the world generally look as things that are absurd and ridiculous, merely because they are beyond the world's comprehension, or because we do not stop to enquire or learn their uses or meaning.

I find that the principal cause why we underrate and despise the savage, is generally because we do not understand him; and the reason why we are ignorant of him and his modes, is that we do not stop to investigate—the world have been too much in the habit of looking upon him as altogether inferior—as a beast, a brute; and unworthy of more than a passing notice. If they stop long enough to form an acquaintance, it is but to take advantage of his ignorance and credulities—to rob him of the wealth and resources of his country;—to make him drunk with whiskey, and visit him with abuses which in his ignorance he never thought of. By this method his first visitors entirely overlook and never understand the meaning of his thousand interesting and characteristic customs; and at the same time, by changing his native modes and habits of life, blot them out from the view of the enquiring world for ever.

It is from the observance of a thousand little and apparently trivial modes and tricks of Indian life, that the Indian character must be learned; and, in fact, it is just the same with us if the subject were reversed: excepting that the system of civilized life would furnish ten apparently useless and ridiculous trifles to one which is found in Indian life; and at least twenty to one which are purely nonsensical and unmeaning.

The civilized world look upon a group of Indians, in their classic dress, with their few and simple oddities, all of which have their moral or meaning, and laugh at them excessively, because they are not like ourselves—we ask, "why do the silly creatures wear such great bunches of quills on their heads?—Such loads and streaks of paint upon their bodies—and bear's grease? abominable!" and a thousand other equally silly questions, without ever stopping to think that Nature taught them to do so—and that they all have some definite importance or meaning which an 292 Indian could explain to us at once, if he were asked and felt disposed to do so—that each quill in his head stood, in the eyes of his whole tribe, as the symbol of an enemy who had fallen by his hand—that every streak of red ● 302 paint covered a wound which he had got in honourable combat—and that the bear's grease with which he carefully anoints his body every morning, from

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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head to foot, cleanses and purifies the body, and protects his skin from the bite of musquitoes, and at the same time preserves him from colds and coughs which are usually taken through the pores of the skin. 302

At the same time, an Indian looks among the civilized world, no doubt, with equal, if not much greater, astonishment, at our apparently, as well as *really*, ridiculous customs and fashions; but he laughs not, nor ridicules, nor questions,—for his natural good sense and good manners forbid him,—until he is reclining about the fire-side of his wigwam companions, when he vents forth his just criticisms upon the learned world, who are a rich and just theme for Indian criticism and Indian gossip. 000

An Indian will not ask a white man the reason why he does not oil his skin with bears' grease, or why he does not paint his body—or why he wears a hat on his head, or why he has buttons on the back part of his coat, where they never can be used—or why he wears whiskers, and a shirt collar up to his eyes—or why he sleeps with his head towards the fire instead of his feet—why he walks with his toes out instead of turning them in—or why it is that hundreds of white folks will flock and crowd round a table to see an Indian eat—but he will go home to his wigwam fire-side, and "make the welkin ring" with jokes and fun upon the ignorance and folly of the knowing world.

A wild Indian thrown into the civilized atmosphere will see a man occasionally moving in society, wearing a cocked hat; and another with a laced coat and gold or silver epaulettes upon his shoulders, without knowing or enquiring the meaning of them, or the objects for which they are worn. Just so a white man travels amongst a wild and untaught tribe of Indians, and sees occasionally one of them parading about their village, with a head-dress of eagles' quills and ermine, and elevated above it a pair of beautifully polished buffalo horns; and just as ignorant is he also, of their meaning or importance; and more so, for the first will admit the presumption that epaulettes and cocked hats amongst the civilized world, are made for some important purpose,—but the latter will presume that horns on an Indian's head are nothing more nor less (nor can they be in their estimation), than Indian nonsense and stupidity.

This brings us to the "corned crest" again, and if the poor Indian scans epaulettes and cocked hats, without enquiring their meaning, and explaining them to his tribe, it is no reason why I should have associated with the noble dignitaries of these western regions, with horns and ermine on their heads, and then to have introduced the subject without giving some further clue to their importance and meaning. For me, this negligence would be doubly unpardonable, as I travel, not to *trade* but to *herald* the Indian and his dying customs to posterity. 292

This custom then, which I have before observed belongs to all the north-western tribes, is one no doubt of very ancient origin, having a purely classic meaning. No one wears the head-dress surmounted with horns ex- [171]

142 a dark brown, some few indeed I observed whose hair was almost fair. A Big Belly, in particular, I saw with yellow hair. This circumstance, I believe, could scarcely proceed from any connection with the whites, as it is now more than thirty years since they first saw us, and this man was at least forty years old. Their eyes are jet black, some few are of a dark grey.

LONG HAIR.

●302 The men wear their hair long, twisted into small quaittes hanging down to the rump. Some have it of enormous length, trailing upon the ground. They seldom tie it, but allow their numerous small quaittes to flow in a more graceful manner upon their backs; they always daub it with white and red earth. The women wear their hair short, allowing it to grow no longer than to be of sufficient length to cover the ears and neck. They never tie it, nor make use of any ornament for the head further than sometimes daubing it with red earth.

LASCIVIOUSNESS.

837 609 578 They seem to be a very lascivious people. The men make not the least scruple in offering their wives to lay with strangers, without any solicitation, and are even offended, if their offers are not accepted, unless you can convince them, by some good reason, for refusing to comply, and that it is not out of contempt. They always expect payment for their complaisance, but a mere trifle will satisfy, even a single coat-button. Notwithstanding this courteous behavior to strangers, they are not entirely free from jealousies among themselves, which sometimes cause quarrels and bloodshed. The woman generally falls a sacrifice in an affair of this nature.1

MODE OF ROASTING MEAT.

252 They have a very peculiar way of roasting meat; a plecotte, in particular, is suspended from the roof of the hut exactly over the fire, the cord being passed through and fastened to the centre of the piece keeps it in a flat position directly over the flames. A person is seated near it, and with a small stick keeps it continually in motion by pushing it to and fro. When one side is done, it is turned over, and fit for use. This method is much more expeditious than the common way of roasting before the fire, and preferable, as it retains the natural juice and flavor.2

EDWARD D. NEILL.

1 [See category 116, p. 342-3. -A.]

2 [For further information in Henry's Journal not mentioned by Neill, see category 116, pp. 343 ff. -Analyst.]